



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901

November 30, 2009

Thomas Johnson, Jr.
U.S. Dept. of Energy
Canoga Park, CA 91309

Dear Community Member:

In December 2008, an EPA fact sheet announced the availability of the Technical Assistance Services for Communities (TASC) program for its work at the Santa Susana Field Laboratory (SSFL). The TASC is funded and managed under a national EPA contract, and provides an independent environmental expert to assist the community to understand EPA's work and provide input into the process.

Initially, two groups made formal expressions of interest in receiving TASC services, followed later by a third group. Through numerous discussions with various active members of the community, EPA learned that there was opposition to TASC.

On May 27, 2009, a TASC informational meeting was attended by a TASC contractor and many community members who expressed strongly-held opposing viewpoints. While some attendees supported TASC and wanted to receive TASC services, others were opposed to TASC being made available to any group.

Some attendees questioned the TASC program's ability to find an independent technical advisor sufficiently qualified to review the highly technical radiological documents. Others claimed that the existing SSFL Interagency Workgroup was sufficient to meet their needs and protested the additional meetings they would have to attend. Some were concerned that TASC would not be focused on EPA's work but on long-debated sources of the original contamination and challenges about claimed past health impacts.

EPA spent considerable time considering all of the comments received at the informational meeting, and through phone calls and direct conversations. EPA attempted to find a process to provide TASC services that was inclusive of various perspectives while addressing concerns.

Based on significant opposition to TASC, EPA Region IX has decided not to provide TASC services for its radiological survey work at the SSFL, at the present time. EPA remains open to providing TASC services if an appropriate process can be established or potentially folded into the public participation efforts of the State agency that has lead responsibility for the cleanup, DTSC.

EPA's TASC contract manager, Luis Garcia-Bakarich, is currently on extended Family Leave. For questions about the TASC program, please contact Dana Barton at 415-972-3087. For questions about EPA's community involvement activities at SSFL, please contact myself at 415-972-3245 or at EPA's toll-free message line, 800-231-3075, or via e-mail at cooper.david@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Cooper". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

David Cooper
Community Involvement Coordinator